

Coast Guard



July
2004

Shield of Freedom

WOW!

NASCAR driver Justin Labonte puts the Coast Guard in racing's winner's circle for the first time.

Justin Labonte

G8 Security



Famous Flier



Angel's Gate

Heroes

The world's best Coast Guard

LT. DALE TAYLOR

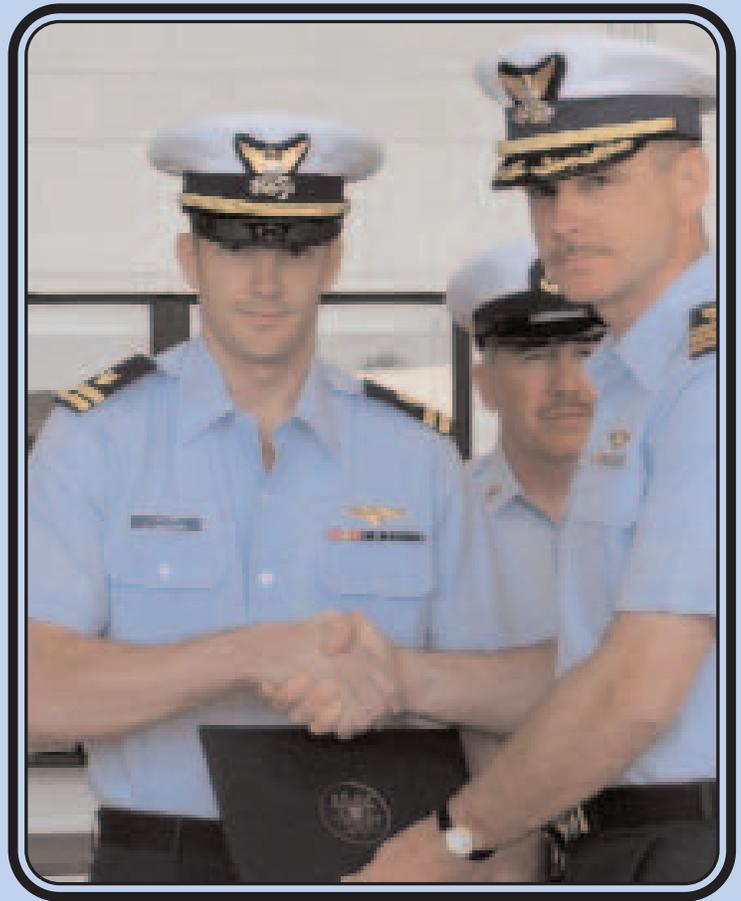
Lt. Dale Taylor, a Coast Guard helicopter pilot from Air Station Savannah, Ga., received a Coast Guard Medal for a dramatic rescue December 2003. In addition, co-pilot Lt. j.g. Bill Strickland and flight mechanic AVT2 Brian Jerritt also received medals for their performance during the same rescue.

The crew from Savannah was deployed in Key West, Fla., when a job well done turned into a rescue that will not be forgotten. On Dec. 9, they received a call that the 27-foot sailing vessel Jada was in distress 47 nautical miles off Key West. The crew arrived on scene to find 15-foot seas pounding a small sailboat.

After radio communications were established with the Jada over a hand held radio, it was evident that the two men aboard wanted to get off the boat, fearing the vessel would sink. Normally, a rescue swimmer would be lowered down to assist the survivors into a rescue basket, but in this case that was not an option. The rescue helicopter did not have a rescue swimmer aboard due to the nature of deployment they were on, so the crew had to improvise.

Due to the high sea state, the mast of the sailboat was swaying too much to lower the basket to the deck, so the two men were instructed to don their life vests, abandon ship one at a time and get into the water. The first of the two men climbed into the basket with out any difficulty and was hoisted to safety into the helicopter.

The second man (the 81-year-old father of the first survivor) was having difficulty getting to the basket. The man lost his life jacket when he entered the water and the 25-knot winds blew it away. It became apparent after several attempts that the man was unable to get into the basket. The man, severely exhausted, gave up and struggled to get back aboard the Jada, but the



waves were slamming him against the boat. He started to go under and it was evident the man could drown.

Taylor, the aircraft commander, made the decision to climb out of the left seat and be deployed into the water to assist the ailing man into the basket. Strickland maneuvered Taylor into position, then Jerritt hoisted the father into the safety of the helicopter.

Taylor, left behind in the water, inflated his emergency life vest while waiting for the helicopter to reposition to pick him up. The subsequent hoist went without incident, and the survivors were transported to awaiting medical personnel.

Story and photo courtesy AirSta Savannah

Coast Guard

U.S. Department of Homeland Security



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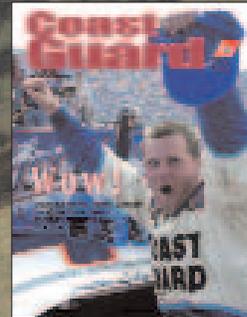
Coast Guard units combine to change batteries in unique Los Angeles lighthouse.

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Check out Coast Guard magazine on the Web.
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ON THE COVER

NASCAR driver Justin Labonte celebrates after his first Busch Series victory in the Coast Guard car at the Tropicana 300 in Joliet, Ill., July 10.

Photo by

PA3 Dave Mosley,
PADET Western Great Lakes



TENDER RETURN The CGC SPAR returns to its homeport in Kodiak, Alaska, May 14 after working along the Aleutian Island chain.

Photo by PAC Marshalena Delaney, D17



Homeland
Security

UP FRONT

SPLISH SPLASH

A boat crew from Station New York plows through waves before escorting the Fleet Week Parade of ships through New York Harbor May 26.

Photo by PA2 Mike Hvozda, PADET New York



UP FRONT







UP FRONT

PROTECT—OARS

A crew from MSST 91106 guards members from the USS Yorktown during a training exercise in Charleston, S.C., harbor.

PHOTO BY PA2 MIKE HVOZDA,
PADET NEW YORK

UP FRONT

SPIRITUAL SCRUM

Members of the Coast Guard Academy's rugby team gathers for a moment of prayer before an April match.

Photo by Cadet Michael Manuel,
Coast Guard Academy





Justin Labonte gets first Busch win

JOLIET, Ill., July 10 — When Justin Labonte rumbled off on his victory lap, waving the checkered flag from his window, it was hard to tell who was prouder — father or son.

Labonte extended his family's winning tradition to another generation Saturday, earning his first NASCAR Busch series victory at the Tropicana Twister 300 as his father Terry looked on.

"To me, personally, it was bigger than any win I've ever had," said Terry Labonte, a two-time NASCAR Winston Cup champion. "I couldn't even talk after the race. It's pretty special, it really is. I don't know what else to say."

Running on Mike Wallace's bumper for the last three laps, Justin Labonte said he didn't think he could catch Wallace. But Wallace ran out of gas after they took the white flag for the final lap, and Justin Labonte flew by him and cruised to the win.

He beat Jason Keller by 0.419 seconds. Jeff Burton was third.

"I was going to do a burnout," Justin Labonte said, "but I can remember my dad saying nobody should do a burnout."

Terry Labonte has always been understated in his victory celebrations, getting the checkered flag and holding it

out the window as he takes his victory lap. There also was the matter of the engine. Justin Labonte is running part-time on the Busch series this year, and he knew he couldn't afford to blow out his best engine.

So while the rest of the field left the track, Justin Labonte drove to the flagstand and asked for the checkered flag. It dropped on the roof, and lay there for several seconds before Justin climbed halfway out of the car and grabbed it.

"He didn't have the fastest car, but something good happened to a good person and a good family, and that's pretty cool to see," Burton said. "He earned the race, nobody gave it to him. People will say he got lucky. They made the right call. They made the right calls to win the race."

And they got all the calls after the race.

Terry Labonte said his cell phone started ringing as he walked from the hauler where he'd watched the race —

"Wore a hole in the top of it" — to victory lane, and didn't stop. It was still ringing about an hour later, as he and Justin talked with reporters.

Justin was in victory lane when he got a phone call from his uncle, Bobby, who won the NASCAR championship in 2000.

"I don't know where he's at, but he said he was watching on TV," Justin Labonte said. "I hate he missed it because he was a big part of this."

It was Bobby Labonte, in fact, who encouraged his nephew to keep racing after a dismal first attempt at the Busch series. Justin Labonte ran 22 races in 1999 and 2000, never finishing better than 14th.

"Honestly, I wasn't ready," Justin Labonte said. "I decided to take a step back. Bobby was the one who said you need to be racing every week. And I learned a lot from my grandpa my last couple of years because he's the one who took me racing. I hate that he's not here today because he's a big contributor."



The winner's circle at the Tropicana Twister 300.

Justin Labonte won the Late Model Stock championship last year, and made one Busch start in preparation for this year. He had run seven other races,

with his best finish an 18th in Charlotte in May.

On Saturday, though, everything went his way.

Down a lap at one point, Justin Labonte caught a break when most of the leaders pitted on lap 182. He stayed on the track and worked his way up through the field, catching Wallace as they came through the first turn on lap 197.

Wallace looked as if he might be able to hold Labonte off for his second straight victory. But as they roared down the straightaway after seeing the white flag, Wallace ran out of fuel. He wound up 15th.

"I couldn't believe when he ran out of gas," Justin Labonte said. "I about ran into him."

Instead, he passed him on the outside and cruised to victory.

"I'm so proud of Justin," Terry Labonte said. "It's hard to describe the feelings, really."

AP

Coast Guard

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CG Auxiliary celebrates 65 years of service



SEATTLE, June 23 — The Coast Guard Auxiliary is celebrating 65 years of volunteer service.

Since World War II, the Auxiliary has assisted the Coast Guard with nearly all of its missions. Today, that volunteer force is made up of more than 36,000 members, more than 5,000 privately owned surface vessels and nearly 300 aircraft.

The auxiliary is a valuable asset in augmenting active duty and reserve Coast Guard personnel. Auxiliary members are recognized as a valuable part of the Coast Guard team and are authorized to wear Coast Guard uniforms with the auxiliary insignia.

Story by PA2 Kurt Fredrickson, 13th Dist.

Top: Auxiliarist Nelson Lampert guides a hoist basket during training with a helicopter from Air Station Barbers Point in Honolulu as fellow auxiliarists Richard Hughes and Robert Keller keep an eye out for safety concerns June 23, 2003.

Right: Coast Guard Auxiliarist Joseph Cirone completes a vessel safety check for Richard Cooper during a patrol on the Potomac River in Washington, D.C., May 28.



WEBHOT!



www.uscg.mil/hq/g-a/deepwater/default.htm

To continue to meet America's 21st century maritime threats and challenges, the Coast Guard initiated the Integrated Deepwater System Program, the largest and most innovative acquisition in the Coast Guard's history.

The IDS is not just "new ships and aircraft," but an integrated approach to upgrading existing assets while transitioning to newer, more capable platforms with improved



systems for command, control, communications, computers, intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance and innovative logistics support.

The IDS is critical to the Coast Guard's future and to America's ability to safeguard our homeland and maritime security for generations to come. Come learn more about the Coast Guard's future at www.uscg.mil/hq/g-a/deepwater/default.htm.

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HANGIN' AROUND

LOS ANGELES, May 18 —

A helicopter crew from Air Station Los Angeles lowers a rescue swimmer for a cliff rescue drill at Point Vicente Lighthouse today.

Photo by PA3 Louis Hebert, PACArea



Around the world, around the clock

The Coast Guard in Anchorage, Alaska, investigated a freon leak that killed one man and injured another on a fishing vessel in Valdez June 27. The Coast Guard established a 300-yard exclusion zone around the vessel and Valdez Fire Department personnel vented the freon from the boat. Personnel from MSO Valdez will board the vessel for further investigation once a chemist certifies it safe for entry.

Coast Guard Station Alexandria Bay, working in conjunction with the U.S. Border Patrol, seized 63 pounds of marijuana June 14 at the Leo Swamp Road Landing in Hogansburg, N.Y. The seizure was a result of an on-going joint operation, coordinating U.S. and Canadian efforts along the international maritime border to detect, intercept and deter illegal activity.

A Coast Guard helicopter rescue crew rescued three people from 15- to 20-foot seas approximately 100 miles southeast of Cape Hatteras, N.C., June 28. The crew from Coast Guard Air Station Elizabeth City, N.C., lowered a rescue swimmer into the treacherous seas and hoisted the three men to safety.

As a result of a New Orleans Coast Guard Investigative Service investigation, a licensed boat captain was sentenced June 23 to one year in prison and ordered to pay more than \$600,000 in restitution for violation of 18 USC 1115, misconduct and neglect of a ship officer causing the death of a passenger.

The CGC Chincoteague rescued Severo Rodriguez, a 70-year old man from St. Croix, U.S. Virgin Islands, June 18 after a private airplane found him almost 48 hours after he was expected home.

FY'04
By the numbers
compiled June 20

LIVES SAVED: 2,610
SAR cases: 18,212
Marijuana: 17,476 pounds
Cocaine: 56,118 pounds
Migrants: 3,014



Source: G-IPA-2



New York hosts Fleet Week

NEW YORK, May 26 — Crewmembers from the CGC Katherine Walker render honors to the Navy fleet during the parade of ships that starts Fleet Week in New York Harbor today. Photo by PA3 Mike Lutz, PADET New York

ROCKY ROAD



KODIAK, Alaska, June 18 — The Coast Guard investigated the grounding of the 70-foot vessel Waters, homeported in Homer. The vessel struck a dayboard when it grounded on a rock in Narrow Strait north of Kodiak Island near the village of Ouzinke here today. Photo by PA2 Sara Raymer, PADET Kodiak

Coast Guardsmen fall for the fallen

CROSSKEYS, N.J., April 14 — Two Coast Guard employees joined the Concerns of Police Survivors organization to raise awareness for the families of slain law enforcement officers for three days here.

James Shorter and MK2 Adam Kaminiski, both from the Coast Guard's Engineering Logistics Center in Baltimore, joined a 20-person formation made by law enforcement officers to celebrate the COPS 20th anniversary.

Officer Greg Knott of the Montgomery County, Md. Police Department and skydiving enthusiast began planning the event more than two years ago. He advertised nationally for officers who were qualified and interested in meeting here at the northeast premier drop zone — Freefall Adventures.

Federal, state, county, local and military law enforcement agents across the country volunteered their time, money and efforts to see that this vision became a reality. After three days of jumps, two injuries, and damaged gear, the fatigued team successfully completed their formation.

The last man to complete the formation was Kaminski. He used his body flight skills to maneuver into the last position, referred to as the glory slot.

Falling at nearly 120 mph, a perfect 5-point star was formed, and the realization of the vision was a success.

After the formation was successfully completed, Officer Knott said, "I speak for everyone here who participated, we've accomplished something great in memory of our slain brothers and sisters in blue and their families."

Story by Mr. James Shorter and MK2 Adam Kaminski, ELC Baltimore



Twenty law enforcement agents create a five-star formation to celebrate the 20th anniversary of Concerns of Police Survivors.

PROTECTING WORLD LEADERS

Coast Guard units provide first line
of defense at G-8 Summit in Georgia

Story by PAC G. Scott Carr, PADET Jacksonville





PA3 BETH REYNOLDS, PADET ST. PETERSBURG

DEFENSIVE PRESENCE A 25-foot Homeland Security Boat from MSST 91108 patrols the water around Jekyll Island June 2 in preparation for the G-8 Summit.

Government cars, Humvees, local police cars from all around the State of Georgia, and unmarked Ford Crown Victorias dotted the nearly empty streets of Brunswick, St. Simons Island, Jekyll Island and Sea Island in Georgia during the G-8 Summit June 8–10.

The thousands and thousands of protesters law enforcement officials anticipated to arrive in Brunswick, Ga., to protest the G-8 Summit never materialized. The protesters who did arrive were, for the most part, peaceful. There was an exception, though. Fourteen people were arrested on the Summit's last day for obstructing a highway — a misdemeanor in Georgia.

G-8's security, named Operation Eagle Host, was a multi-agency effort that seamlessly brought together local, state and federal law enforcement. The U.S. Secret Service coordinated the overall planning process, but the Coast Guard and the Georgia Department of Natural Resources conducted water security planning. Water security involved Coast Guard boat forces and aviation forces, Georgia DNR, South Carolina DNR, U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service boat forces, the Savannah Chatham Metropolitan Police Department Marine Patrol, and Chatham County Sheriff boat forces.

“We could not have asked for better partners,” said Capt. Tim Close, Coast Guard Incident Commander for G-8. “Together, we enforced security zones on the Savannah River and security zones in the Sea Island/Brunswick area, but the biggest challenges included coordinating operations and logistics for almost 1000 Coast Guard personnel spread throughout two large venues over 80 miles apart and over miles of ocean, rivers and harbor areas.”

Coast Guard units from the 7th District, Gulf Strike Team members and Maritime Safety and Security Teams from Boston, St. Marys, Ga., and Galveston, Texas, descended upon the Golden Isles to enforce a 128 square-mile security zone from the Altamaha River in the north down to Jekyll Island in the south and extending three miles off shore, including the inland waterways. The security zone was the first line of defense in a comprehensive security plan to protect the eight Heads of State attending the Summit.

About 10-miles of the Savannah River, from just east of Elba Island to west of the Port Wentworth, were considered secured, and no vessel could move without captain of the port permission. This security zone was established due to the high concentration of senior staff members who were residing in Savannah hotels adjacent to the river.

Boat crews operated 24 hours a day, scanning the horizon, identifying vessels, conducting escorts

ON PATROL *Below:* The Military Out Load team from Jacksonville, Fla., patrol one of the many rivers and inlets in the secure zone off Jekyll Island June 10 during the G-8 Summit. *Opposite page:* Two 25-foot Homeland Security Boats from MSST 91104 patrol the waters around Jekyll Island in preparation for the G-8 Summit.



of vessels allowed to transit the security zone, and conducting positive control boarding on deep draft vessels entering or exiting the Ports of Brunswick and Savannah. Aircrews from Air Stations Savannah, Ga., and Clearwater, Fla., along with crews from HITRON, patrolled the skies and kept watch for vessels trying to enter the security zone or aircraft trying to transit the FAA established no-fly area.

“The information garnered from the aerial patrols was invaluable in building a maritime domain awareness picture,” said Cmdr. Mark Wilbert, operations section chief for the south venue. “This allowed us to position our forces to maximize our effectiveness on the water,” he continued.

The waters surrounding the G-8 Summit were full of Coast Guard cutters and small boats. Organizing and controlling the movements of these vessels was paramount to the success of the operation and fell to seven command and control platforms strategically located throughout the area. In front of Sea Island, just a stone’s throw away from the eight most powerful lead-

PA3 BETH REYNOLDS, PADET ST. PETERSBURG



ers of the world, boat crews from MSSTs 91108 from St. Marys, Ga., and 91110 out of Boston patrolled the area as a last line of defense on the water, but ultimately Coast Guard forces served as a first layer in the comprehensive security plan.

“Information flow is key,” said Lt. Thomas Ottenwaelder, MSST 91110. “A crew briefing and debriefing process at G-8 benefited communication both up and down the command structure.”

Offshore, the CGC Vigorous controlled the movements and tasking for two 87-foot cutters, a Navy PC



PA3 BETH REYNOLDS, PADET ST. PETERSBURG

170 and several small boats attached to each patrol boat to identify or stop vessels prior to entering the security zone.

Just north of Sea Island, inside a small but tricky inlet, the CGC Hammer's crew served as another command and control platform for Coast Guard assets charged with monitoring the backwaters of Sea Island. Hammer crewmembers received an eminent visitor during the Summit when President Bush took a few minutes during a fishing trip to come alongside the cutter and speak to the crew.

"We thought the president was going to come aboard," said BM3 Michael Gauthier of the Hammer. "I was thinking I would love to pipe, 'United States arriving,' that would have been a once in a lifetime

interacted with the boating public more than any other unit and escorted an average of 10 vessels a day through the security zone.

"Most of the boaters transiting south down the ICW were very patient when faced with long delays," said BM1 Casey Johnson, a reservist who works at Security Detachment Mayport. "The only real problem we had was with some of the local fishermen who weren't very happy that they couldn't go and check their crab traps."

In most cases, Georgia DNR Rangers handled issues with the local fishermen. This allowed state officials to deal directly with state residents, whose world in the small town of Brunswick had been turned upside down by the Summit.

The sailing vessel Meka II concerned security forces when it headed down the ICW June 7. The sailing vessel was rigged like a pirate ship, and the master claimed to be heading to Jacksonville, Fla., for the upcoming Tall Ship event. Normally this wouldn't be an issue, but the Meka II was carrying five cannons, two muskets and 25 pounds of gunpowder.

The master was ordered to anchor overnight in the Mackay River. Early the next morning, a boarding team went aboard the Meka II and verified the master's story. All the power and muskets had to be locked up, and the key was handed over to the boarding officer while the Coast Guard escorted the Meka II through the security zone.

Operation Eagle Host was a success due to months and months of planning by MSO Savannah. As with any large operation, there are always unforeseen obstacles to overcome, and this operation was no different. Extra people showed up, there was a shortage of rooms, and corralling all the keys to the different government vehicles were just some of the issues logistics personnel addressed and resolved as expediently as possible.

Training the different boat crews in area familiarization was paramount to the success of the mission, and that task fell to Station Brunswick. During the first 48 hours, Station Brunswick boat crews operated nearly non-stop as they trained the trainer to pass on their local knowledge of some very tricky waterways.

"The tidal swings between high and low tide would average about nine feet, and places you could go during high tide weren't navigable during low tide," said BM2 Michael Vecchione from Station Cortez. "Brunswick did an excellent job because several areas were not marked or poorly marked," he said.

Once the security zones were activated June 5, boat crews had already been on the water for five days, learning the area and getting ready.



PA3 RYAN DOSS, DT

FIRST LINE OF DEFENSE

MSST 91106 patrols the Savannah River near the Westin Hotel June 5. The New York-based team patrolled off downtown Savannah throughout the G-8 Summit.

opportunity." Instead, the president thanked the Hammer's crew for their service and told them how proud he was of the Coast Guard.

"Even though he didn't come aboard, it was really cool that he stopped by," said Gauthier. "It's not everyday you get to meet the Commander in Chief."

Just inside the entrance to the Port of Brunswick, the 175-foot buoy tender Maria Bray and a host of small boats covered the north and south ends of the Intracoastal Waterway and the Brunswick River.

Auxiliary vessels kept a 24-hour watch on all four bridges inside the security zone ensuring no one could cause mischief around these vital roadways. Small boat crews operated outside the security zone to identify vessels headed both north and south on the ICW or vessels headed east along the Brunswick River.

The crews that operated outside the security zone



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PA3 BETH REYNOLDS, PADET ST. PETERSBURG



PA3 BETH REYNOLDS, PADET ST. PETERSBURG

During the initial in brief June 1, Wilbert said, "I hope this is the most uneventful two weeks of your Coast Guard careers." With respect to security incidents, it was.

Dignitaries departed Sea Island June 10 and 11, and just as quickly as all the government vehicles, Humvees, local police cars and unmarked Crown Victorias had arrived in the area, they disappeared.

The operation provided an opportunity for Coast Guardsmen to experience how future large

scale maritime security operations will integrate federal, state and local partners, according to Wilbert.

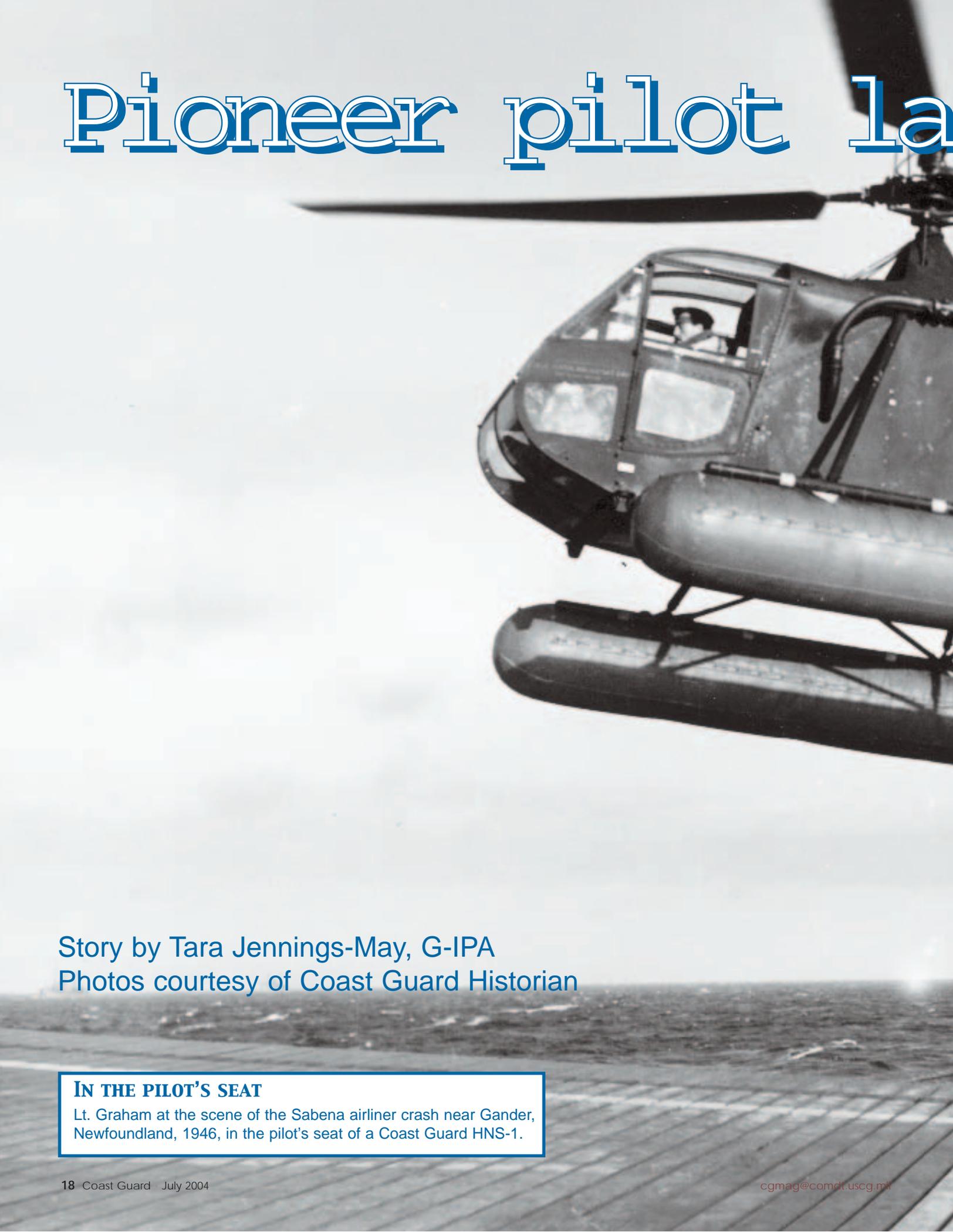
"I had a great time," said Vecchione. "This has to be one of the most well-planned operations I have ever been a part of." 

MANY UNITS, ONE MISSION *Top left:* GM3 Michael Bentley from Group Mayport, Fla., reconstructs a M240 Bravo machine gun at the temporary armory for G-8 Summit security. *Top center:* Lt. Angelina Hildago, commanding officer of the CGC Kingfisher, views a vessel through binoculars while on patrol. *Top right:* BM1 Steve Mansfield mans the radio during an evening security patrol. *Bottom:* Members from the Military Out Load team escort the pirate ship Meka II, which was unaware of the secure zone and complied with the Coast Guard to anchor and wait for instructions.



PA3 BETH REYNOLDS, PADET ST. PETERSBURG

Pioneer pilot la



Story by Tara Jennings-May, G-IPA
Photos courtesy of Coast Guard Historian

IN THE PILOT'S SEAT

Lt. Graham at the scene of the Sabena airliner crash near Gander, Newfoundland, 1946, in the pilot's seat of a Coast Guard HNS-1.

ends in hall of



A Coast Guard aviation pioneer in the development of helicopters for anti-submarine warfare and search and rescue was enshrined in the National Museum of Naval Aviation's Hall of Honor in Pensacola, Fla., May 6. Retired Cmdr. Stewart Graham is one of four selectees for the 2004 enshrinement, and he joins three previous Coast Guard honorees, including his instructor, retired Capt. Frank Erickson.

Since 1979, a committee appointed by the chief of naval operations has enshrined 75 individuals who have made substantial contributions to aviation.

Graham, a Brooklyn native who enlisted in the Coast Guard as a surfman in 1937, witnessed a flight demonstration of a Sikorsky heli-

copter Oct. 20, 1943, in Bridgeport, Conn., which would change the course of his career. The machine's versatility so impressed him that he requested training in rotary wing aircraft.

At the time of the demonstration, Graham already had earned his wings as an enlisted pilot and had been commissioned as an ensign. He was flying seaplanes and amphibians on anti-submarine warfare patrols and search and rescue missions out of the Coast Guard Air Station at Floyd Bennett Field in Brooklyn, N.Y.

Following only three and a half hours of instruction under the Coast Guard's first helicopter pilot, then-Cmdr. Frank Erickson, he soloed on a YR-4 helicopter near the Vought-Sikorsky factory in October 1943. A

month later, he ferried himself and Erickson in what he described as a nerve-racking flight aboard the first Coast Guard helicopter — perhaps not unlike flights taken today by pilots in HH-65's with engine problems — from Bridgeport to Coast Guard Air Station Brooklyn, where he began training other rotary wing pilots.

"The only official justification for the helicopter at this time was experimenting with it to develop a weapon for the Navy in anti-submarine warfare," said Graham in 1995, "but, instead of this, Frank [Erickson] concentrated on developing it for search and rescue, training pilots and gaining widespread interest for political support."

With about 65 hours of flying time, Graham transferred to the British merchant vessel SS Daghestan, where he participated in a highly secret operation of testing the use of helicopters off merchant ships while in convoy as anti-submarine warfare. Hurricane-force winds and sea conditions prevented flying until the 10th day. The more experienced British pilots still declined to fly, but Graham accepted the mission, making the first helicopter flight in history from shipboard while in convoy, then landing 30 minutes later on the pitching deck. The Navy awarded Graham an Air Medal for this venture.

Graham also conducted the first helicopter demonstration at the U.S. Capitol before members of Congress in 1945. "Frank was trying to sell the helicopter idea to anyone who would listen," said Graham in 1995. "Even other Coast Guard pilots were not interested, and I was looked upon as not having all my marbles. I was ridiculed beyond belief among my fellow fliers that I would jeopardize my well-being to fly such a contraption." Gradually, however, ex-enlisted pilots began showing interest in helicopters, eventually becoming instructors themselves.

Graham soon became the project pilot for the Anti-Submarine Helicopter Dipping Sonar program, run by the Naval Research Lab in Washington, D.C. He flew the helicopter that tested the dipping sonar



COAST GUARD PIONEER
Cmdr. Stewart Graham

that is still used by today's Navy anti-submarine warfare helicopter squadrons.

He then moved on to Elizabeth City, N.C., where he again served under Erickson to establish a new Coast Guard aviation section, the Rotary Wing Development Unit, which eventually became a headquarters unit. They developed innovations that have been modified and made more sophisticated but are still in use today, such as the rescue basket, sliding main cabin door, emergency flotation, flight controls stabilization, automatic pilot, sensitive hovering indicators, and instrumentation for blind flying.

"Most of our successes were built on a multitude of failures," said Graham.

Graham achieved international recognition when he, Erickson and several other Coast Guard units undertook the "Miracle at Gander" mission in 1946, rescuing 18 survivors of a Sabena Airlines passenger aircraft that had crashed into a hillside in a treacherous area of Newfoundland that only a helicopter could reach. To conduct this feat, Graham supervised the disassembly

of a helicopter to transport it by plane to the Gander area.

The pilots received the Belgian government's "Knight of the Order of Leopold" Medal and the Air Medal. The rescue highlighted the utility of the helicopter to save lives in remote locations and cemented a place for rotary wing aircraft in Coast Guard aviation.

His aviation firsts continued. Graham piloted the first helicopter to bring airmail to North Carolina's Outer Banks in 1946. A year later, he conducted the first night medical evacuation flight, flying a patient from Cape Hatteras to Elizabeth City, N.C.

Graham set the record for the longest unescorted helicopter flight in history when he made a transcontinental HO3S-1G flight from Elizabeth City, N.C., to Port Angeles, Wash., in March 1949. The 10-day flight was 3,900 miles, with 57.6 hours in flight.

Rescuing three survivors in the Gulf of Mexico by performing the first night rescue hoist in aviation history garnered Graham the Distinguished Flying Cross in 1955.

Graham also provided air cover of

the Queen of England's yacht Britannia as she dedicated and toured the 1959 grand opening of the St. Lawrence Seaway.

His only helicopter crash took place in 1944, in an aircraft in which he was a backseat passenger. He injured his back but returned to work in a few months.

When inducted into the Coast Guard Aviation Hall of Fame in 1995, Graham noted that his mascot, a cocker spaniel named Brownie, "had more time than most helicopter pilots. She flew with me on many test flights during my work at Elizabeth City."

His accomplishments earned him the Naval Helicopter Association's Mark Starr Pioneer Award in 2002. The Twirly Birds, an International Organization of Pioneer Helicopter Pilots, presented him with the Charles Lester Morris Award in recognition of his contributions to vertical flight.

Graham retired in 1960 after 24 years of service. He and his wife, Mae, reside in Naples, Maine. His two sons, Ross and William, also are retired from the Coast Guard. 🇺🇸

Graham firsts

- Pioneered helicopter use for search and rescue as well as anti-submarine warfare platforms.
- He participated in the development of numerous helicopter innovations, including the rescue basket, sliding main cabin door, emergency flotation, flight controls stabilization, automatic pilot, sensitive hovering indicators, and instrumentation for blind flying.
- Made the first helicopter flight in history from shipboard while in convoy, earning an Air Medal from the Navy; took place aboard the British merchant vessel SS Daghestan on Jan. 16, 1944, during an operation to test helicopters as a tool for anti-submarine warfare.
- Served as the project pilot for the Anti-Submarine Helicopter Dipping Sonar program in 1946, flying the helicopter that tested the dipping sonar that is still used by today's Navy anti-submarine warfare helicopter squadrons.
- Demonstrated the utility of the helicopter to save lives in remote locations through his and other Coast Guard units participation in the "Miracle at Gander" rescue in 1946, which rescued 18 survivors of a Sabena Airlines passenger aircraft in Newfoundland. Earned the Belgian government's "Knight of the Order of Leopold" Medal. The rescue cemented a place for rotary wing aircraft in Coast Guard aviation.
- Piloted the first helicopter to bring airmail to North Carolina's Outer Banks in 1946.
- Conducted the first medical evacuation at night by helicopter, without night flight instrumentation, on Dec. 5, 1947, from Cape Hatteras to Elizabeth City, N.C.
- Set the record for the longest unescorted helicopter flight in history when he made a transcontinental HO3S-1G flight from Elizabeth City, N.C., to Port Angeles, Wash., from March 24 to April 3, 1949. The 10-day flight was 3,900 miles, with 57.6 hours in flight.
- First pilot to accumulate more than 1,000 flight hours.
- Performed the first night rescue hoist on Jan. 9, 1953 at Air Station St. Petersburg, Fla.; he received the Distinguished Flying Cross.

Local aton team keeps

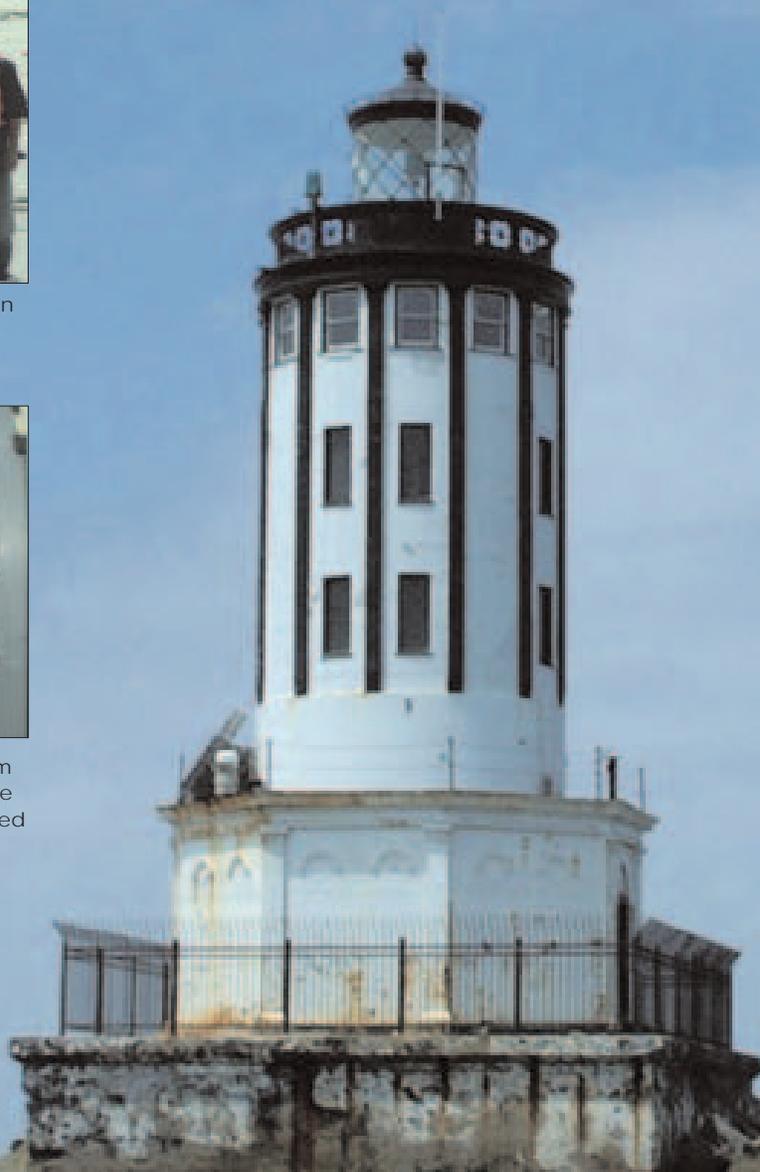
Story and photos by PA3 Chris Grisafe, PADET Los Angeles



Crewmembers with the Aids to Navigation Team in Los Angeles prepare to receive new batteries to install in Angel's Gate's Lighthouse.



EM3 Bart Gaska, with the Aids to Navigation team in Los Angeles, helps install a new battery charge controller in Angel's Gate Lighthouse. This required an overhaul of the lighthouse's electrical system.



s Angel's Gate shining

If you've ever owned a flashlight you know that every now and then you have to change the batteries to keep it going. Normally that isn't a big deal, but if the batteries you're working with weigh nearly 200 pounds and the light you're changing them into is located off shore, the task may be a bit more challenging, and definitely not your "run-of-the-mill" job.

The Los Angeles Lighthouse, known as Angel's Gate, is anything but run of the mill. Situated on a 40-foot concrete square at the end of a 9,250-foot breakwater made up of nearly three million tons of rock, Angel's Gate Lighthouse is the only one of its kind in California and is a beacon to the third largest container port in the world.

Though the light is unique, it is just one of 182 navigational aids the Coast Guard's Aids to Navigation Team in Los Angeles is responsible for maintaining. The 13-member team, composed of active duty, reserve, and auxiliary members, services Angel's Gate at least four times a year. However, changing the batteries is a less frequent chore.

"It's been about 10 years since the Coast Guard last changed the batteries on Angel's Gate," said EM3 Bart Gaska from the aton team.

The change requires a certain amount of coordination between people and assets. The ANT first had to order the batteries which took about six months to manufacture. The batteries are too large for the aton team's small boat to carry, requiring the help of the crew of the CGC

George Cobb. The George Cobb, a 175-foot buoy tender, is equipped with a crane enabling its crew to transfer the large batteries to and from the lighthouse.

"Changing out batteries is a challenging job," said BMC David Bullard, officer in charge of the ANT Los Angeles. "To get 200-pound batteries from a floating object to a pier, off load six batteries, then load six more, then actually get the batteries up to the lighthouse, it's a big job."

Once the batteries were transferred to the lighthouse, the rest of the work was left to the aton team, who did more than just change the batteries.

"We did a major overhaul of the light," said Gaska. "We replaced all the wires for the power system, the batteries, and installed a battery charge controller system so that the batteries get recharged with a balanced flow of electricity."

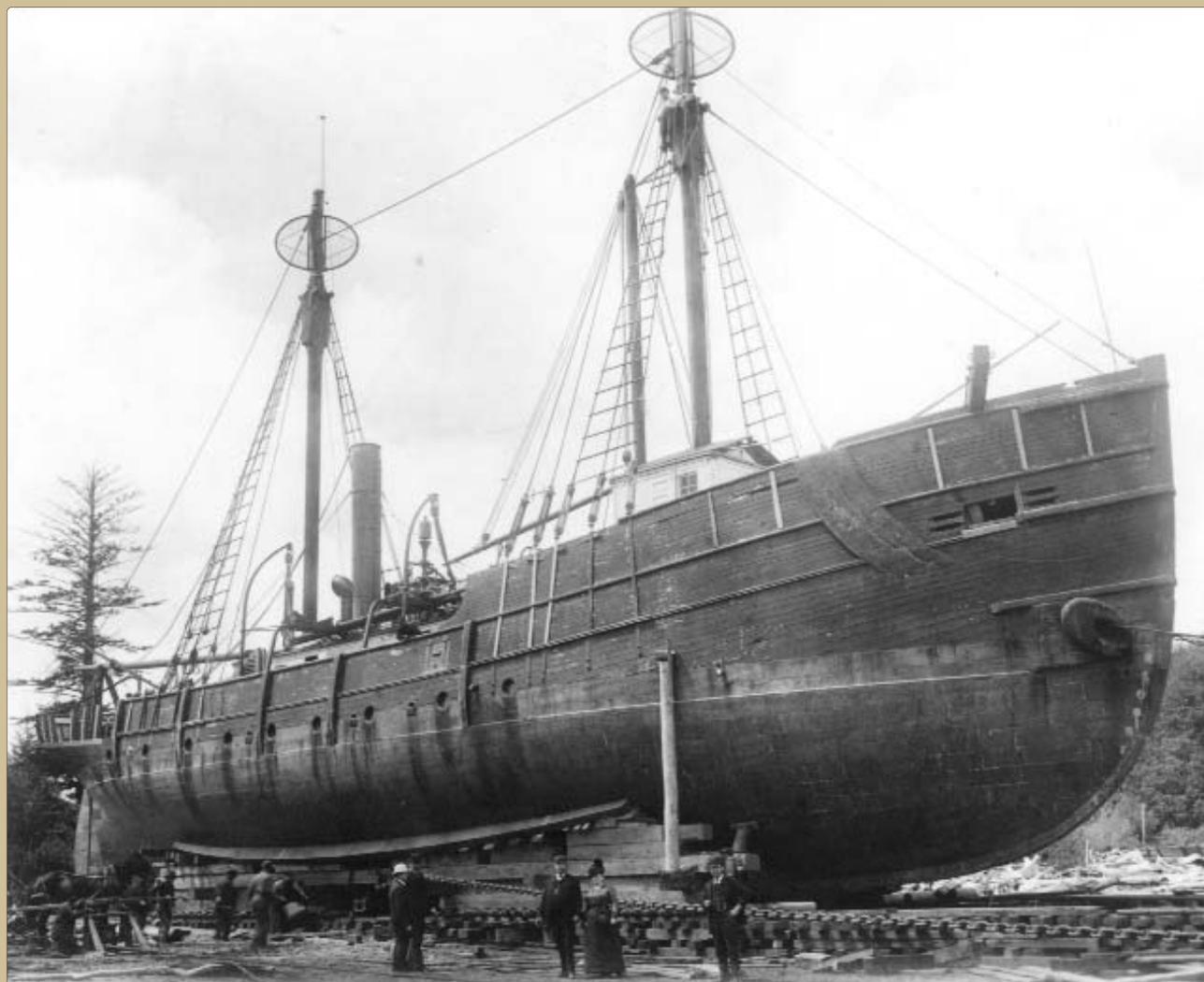
"This specific job is not part of everyone's normal routine, so for everything to go as smoothly as it did required some good prep work," said Bullard.

The evolution took about 13 hours to complete.

"There was good teamwork by the crew to get it done," said Bullard. "It was a long day, but they did an excellent job."

"We installed maintenance-free batteries that have an expected life span of 20 years," said Bullard. "So the next time we need to change these batteries, I'll be retired. We'll all be retired!" 

Old 8x10



The Long Haul

Lightships were often victims to storms, and Columbia River Lightship #50 was no exception. During a gale Nov. 29, 1899, the ship's 2-inch mooring chain snapped, leaving the vessel to drift in the 74 mph winds.

Attempts by two steamboats to tow Lightship #50 failed, and it was determined that grounding the vessel would save the ship and crew. The crew managed to sail the vessel between two sections of rocky coast, and finally grounded it on a strip of sand off Cape Disappointment, Wash.

Over the next 16 months, several attempts to refloat the ship were made, but none were successful. Heavy seas, the suction of the

sand into which the ship was stuck, high tides and other natural obstructions made the work quite difficult. The ship partially filled with sand, and was continually pounded by the surf.

Finally, a marine railway was built at the site. The ship was emptied of sand, then jacked onto a cradle and hauled overland 700 yards, through the woods, into Bakers Bay, Wash.

Sufficient hull repairs were made there for the vessel to be towed to Portland, Ore., where it was thoroughly repaired.

Lightship #50 returned to its station Aug. 18, 1901.

Story and photo courtesy of the Coast Guard Historian

Greetings from Air Station Savannah, Ga., and Air Facility Charleston, S.C.



Air Station Savannah, Ga., and its various crews of Coast Guardsmen have proudly served the Low Country for more than 40 years. Today, Air Station Savannah, Air Facility Charleston, S.C., and five HH-65B helicopters protect more than 450 miles of coast stretching from the border of North Carolina and South Carolina to Melbourne, Fla.

The crews of the air facility faithfully stand watch for 24 hours and rotate on a daily basis to cover the northern portion of their area of responsibility. An AMT1 is permanently assigned to the facility as station keeper to maintain the facility and assist the duty crew with aircraft maintenance.

Airfac Charleston crews fly almost as many search and rescue cases each year as all the other air facilities combined, and even more than some air stations. They prosecute more than 300 search and rescue cases annually, working with Groups Charleston and Mayport, and protect three of the nation's 13 strategic ports by supporting marine safety offices in Charleston, Savannah and Jacksonville, Fla. Recently, the two units played a crucial role in providing water-side security for the G8 Summit in Brunswick, Ga.

The exciting and rewarding operational tempo is

complemented by the fact that Savannah is a great place to live. Home to more than 270,000 Georgians, Savannah is a city rich in history and tradition. It is also a popular tourist destination, hosting more than six million visitors each year. People are drawn by the historic downtown area, the yearly St. Patrick's Day celebrations, and the shopping and dining on River Street. The beach communities of Hilton Head, S.C., and Tybee Island, Ga., are also favorites of tourists and locals. Savannah's charm has also provided backdrops for movies like *Forest Gump*, *Midnight in the Garden of Good and Evil*, *the General's Daughter* and *Forces of Nature*.

The air station and facility share a complement of 28 pilots, one maintenance CWO, 31 AMTs, 12 AETs, 11 ASTs, two YNs, three SKs, two HSs and an OS. They are home to a four-person intelligence team, several reservists and four civilians. They also have a strong airman program that graduates an average of 15 aviation petty officers each year.

Visit www.uscg.mil/D7/units/as-savannah/ for more information.

Story and photo by Lt. Aaron Sanders, AirSta Savannah

Housing

The cost of living is affordable, with rent for one-bedroom apartments averaging \$650 and four bedroom houses averaging \$1500. The utilities are average, with electric bills running about \$100 during the peak months for a small apartment. No government quarters are available.

Facilities

The air station is located on Hunter Army Airfield, which offers a complete range of exchange and recreational facilities including: commissary, library, bowling alley, swimming pool and athletic fields. AirSta Savannah also offers an auto hobby shop, tennis court, volleyball court, small playground for children and a large, screened pavilion for morale events.

Education

Armstrong University and Savannah State University are located in Savannah. Georgia Southern is in Statesboro, Ga., about an hour away. Also, Hunter Army Air Field has a strong ESO department.

Weather

Weather is generally hot, with a summer heat index of more than 100. Winter and spring are mild. It almost never snows.

Check out Coast Guard career opportunities! Call 877-NOW USCG

HOOKED UP

Seaman Rob Hamilton, from the CGC Venturous, helps hoist a migrant to safety July 13 after she was found more than a day after the overcrowded vessel she was traveling on capsized.

Photo by PA1 Danielle DeMarino, 7th Dist.

